

## MEMO

**TO: Boulder Planning Commission and Interested Parties**

**FROM: Lee Nellis, FAICP**

**DATE: April 30, 2021**

**RE: Guest Ranches?**

Guest ranches are next on the list of specific uses we agreed to talk about. I was looking at Boulder's current definition, which is reproduced here:

**Guest Ranch:** A facility, including either a single building or resort cabins, which serves as a destination point for visitors and generally has accessory recreational facilities for the use of guests.

This is unusual. I can't find another definition of guest ranch that doesn't include meals. But thinking about the definition led me to what I think is the key question.

If a guest ranch typically combines lodging, meals, and recreational activities (I picture it with horses, but I suppose there could as easily be a mountain bike dude ranch), and since the Town of Boulder would regulate a hotel, a restaurant, and/or a recreational enterprise as a commercial use, do we even need to define "guest ranch?"

There are two reasons we might.

First, are there performance standards the Town would apply to a guest ranch that are not included in the commercial development standards? If so, then we need to add them. My initial reaction is that the adopted standards address everything except livestock handling. We could add something about that if you want. Is there something else that is unique to guest ranches that I'm missing?

Second, are there existing ranches (genuinely agricultural operations) that might want to benefit from agritourism, but that do not have direct access to UT-12? If so, having guest ranch defined separately might be helpful to them. The Town could, if it wanted, allow guest ranches that do not have direct highway access.

Let's try to answer these questions on May 13. I think we will then have addressed the need for additional detailed standards for commercial development and can focus on the residential development/housing question.